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Item 6 of the agenda of the
Standing Committee

DRAFT REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS ON ITS IN-SESSIONAL MEETING HELD DURING THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, 16-19 FEBRUARY 1993

Rapporteur: Mr. Thomas STELZER (Austria)

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING, ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The Standing Committee for Programme Matters held an in-sessional meeting during the special session of the Governing Council convened in New York from 16 to 19 February 1993. The Vice-President of the Governing Council, H.E. Dr. Oscar Serrate Cuellar (Bolivia), served as Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Thomas Stelzer (Austria) was elected Rapporteur.

2. At its first meeting on 16 February 1993, the Standing Committee adopted its agenda and tentative schedule of work contained in document DP/1993/L.1. The Standing Committee also agreed to maintain a flexible schedule of work.

III. COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

A. Africa

1. Country programme approvals

Zimbabwe

1. The Deputy Resident Representative presented the third country programme for Zimbabwe for the period 1993 to 1996 with a net IPF of $18.4 million. The thrust of the new country programme was to support the Government's economic reform programme, concentrating on three key areas: economic management, income generation and environment. He noted that a long-term perspective study was expected to be launched in the early stages of country programme implementation.

2. The Representative of the Government of Zimbabwe expressed his gratitude to UNDP for its support to the development of his country since independence. He stated that the third country programme differed both in its focus and implementation modality from the previous country programme and emphasized the Government's commitment to the national execution modality for capacity-building. He was appreciative of the catalytic role of UNDP and made specific mention of a national seminar on environment organized by UNDP. He underlined that the country programme was directly related to the Government's economic reform programme.

3. Nine representatives commented on the country programme. The concentration in three key areas where UNDP had comparative advantages was commended. The effectiveness of the UNDP office in Harare was also commended by several speakers. Clarification of the UNDP role in implementation and monitoring the economic reform programme was sought and it was observed that UNDP assistance should go beyond the study of public enterprises to support for privatization. Two delegations noted with concern that only 4 per cent of the IPF had been proposed as support for work on the environment. Another noted that HIV/AIDS, although a major problem, was not included as an area for assistance. The target from national execution was considered to be highly ambitious and the lack of indicators of programme would make monitoring and assessment difficult. Delegations also noted that UNDP should play a more active role in aid coordination.

4. The representative of the Government of Zimbabwe replied to questions raised, noting the constraints to privatization but emphasizing the wish of the Government to see ownership in the hands of nationals and to achieve full national execution of the country programme. The Deputy Resident Representative pointed out that non-IPF resources were expected to finance activities in the field of environment but would not target tourism, as proposed by one delegation. The World Bank was contributing substantially to the national programme on AIDS. Efforts were under way to improve United Nations coordination. Indicators of progress, while implicit in the document,

would be elaborated during the development of subprogrammes and projects to facilitate evaluation.

5. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the third country programme for Zimbabwe.

Ethiopia

6. The Resident Representative presented the fifth country programme for Ethiopia (DP/CP/ETH/5), which had a net IPF of $146.3 million for the period 1993-1997. Support to activities in six areas was proposed: increased food production; food security and nutrition; improvement of the resource-population-sustainability balance; capacity-building in human resource development in both the public and private sectors; disaster-preparedness, prevention and mitigation; management of economic and technical change in both the public and private sectors; and economic recovery and reconstruction. He emphasized that the new country programme would be reviewed at the beginning of 1994 following national elections and the installation of a new Government.

7. The Representative of Ethiopia provided background on political developments and the economic situation in the country, emphasizing the extensive demobilization of soldiers, the transition to a market economy and the progressive laws and reforms introduced. He noted the importance of reviewing the country programme in 1994 in light of developments under the new regime. He indicated that aid coordination was the responsibility of the Government but that there was need for more coordination of the United Nations system and within UNDP - in the latter, particularly for addressing transborder issues such as drought.

8. Eight other delegations commented on the country programme. They observed that the links among the six areas of concentration were not clear nor had environmental issues been addressed sufficiently. One delegation felt that the programme encompassed too many areas of activity. UNDP should concentrate on areas where it had a comparative advantage and experience, particularly in capacity-building, poverty alleviation, and in support of the programme for management of the economy and technical change. One delegation proposed that UNDP should assist in developing cross-sectoral policies and programmes since sectoral activities had received considerable attention. Support by UNDP for elections and for Eritrea were not mentioned in the document and delegates sought further information in that regard. The forthright assessment of the fourth programme was commended. One delegation called for greater prioritization and attention to lessons learned from implementing the previous country programme and called for increased efforts for integrating activities of the United Nations system while another delegation commended the United Nations for its coordination efforts at the field level. The need for finding a balance between relief and longer-term development assistance was stressed and the need to review the programme in

early 1994 was underlined. It was noted that more resource mobilization was critical for the success of the programme.

9. In reply to questions, the Assistant Administrator emphasized that considerable attention was being given to improving coordination both in the United Nations system and within UNDP. She noted that $6 million from the IPF for Ethiopia had been earmarked for Eritrea, with the agreement of the Government of Ethiopia, should Eritrea elect for statehood, and that in the meantime UNDP was maintaining its liaison office in Asmara.

10. The Resident Representative replied that efforts would be made to associate other United Nations agencies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and bilateral donors with the preparation of programme frameworks for the country programme and assured the Committee that links between programmes would be further detailed. The important issues of environment and gender would be incorporated as integral parts of the subprogrammes. UNDP assistance would be given to the electoral process and national execution would be sought, relying on implementing agencies in areas where Government capacity was not well developed.

11. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for Ethiopia.

Mauritania

12. The Assistant Administrator and Director, Regional Bureau for Africa introduced the fourth country programme for Mauritania for the period 1993-1996. It had a net IPF of $17.2 million and identified two areas of concentration: (a) rural development and (b) human resources and poverty alleviation. It took into account the priorities for technical cooperation outlined in the Government's programme for economic consolidation and growth, which remained valid. In addition to the IPF, the Joint Consultative Group on Policies agencies would provide $47 million and other UNDP-administered funds were expected to contribute up to $27.1 million.

13. The Representative of Mauritania expressed his Government's appreciation to UNDP and called for approval of the country programme, which was highly relevant for the country's development.

14. One delegation commented that the areas of concentration represented high priorities for the country; another said the objectives were imprecise and did not entirely reflect what had already been accomplished in the country, for example, in the development of the infrastructure. The need for balance between urban and rural development programmes was emphasized along with the need for close collaboration among donors, for which UNDP played an important role.

15. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fourth country programme for Mauritania.

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Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Thomas Stelzer (Austria)

CHAPTER III. COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS (continued)

Ghana

1. The fifth country programme for Ghana, with a net IPF for the period 1993-1996 of $46.8 million, was presented by the representative of the Government of Ghana. The country programme focused on three main areas of concentration: capacity-building for development management; support for the private sector and science and technology development and participatory development for poverty alleviation. The representative provided background information on the country's development, in particular its experiences with human development and the social implications of structural adjustment, and noted that the Government supported the national execution modality for the fifth cycle and would establish a framework for national execution of programmes through a national programme management committee.

2. Several delegations commended the country programme, including its three areas of concentration, and its strong regional thrust, while one found the programme too ambitious, given the limited resources. Several delegations also pointed out the need for a concerted centralized effort in Ghana to use aid effectively. Another delegate suggested that a plant-breeding programme

should be included under the agricultural programme. The comparative advantage of UNDP with regard to AIDS in Ghana was questioned, in view of the large donor commitment in this area. It was suggested that performance indicators should be output-oriented and quantifiable to make it possible to assess achievements. One delegate regretted that UNDP activities in Ghana in the past had not been more focused and expressed his satisfaction at the improved quality of the fifth country programme, especially the emphasis on cooperative efforts with other donors and on private sector development. The utility of national technical cooperation assessment and programmes (NATCAP) exercises in Ghana as an effective aid coordination mechanism was questioned.

3. The Resident Representative responded by noting that monthly meetings with donors were being held; that there was an emphasis on bottom-up planning; that the agricultural programme was designed to be comprehensive; and that UNDP had a key role to play in the fight against AIDS in cooperation with other donors. He undertook to incorporate the suggestions made in the implementation of the programme.

4. The Committee recommended that the Govering Council adopt the fifth country programme for Ghana.

Sao Tome and Principe

5. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA), in introducing the fourth country programme for Sao Tome and Principe, noted that the third country programme, approved for the period 1988-1991, had been extended for one additional year, through 1992. This had been done to incorporate results of the round-table process in the formulation of the new country programme for the period 1993-1996. The fourth country programme reflected the results of the round-table meeting held in Geneva in July 1992, the follow-up mission on the debt rescheduling held in February 1993 and the ongoing discussions concerning an expanded structural adjustment facility. It also emphasized the important support of the donor community to Sao Tome and Principe and the aid coordination role of UNDP. The country programme focused on two major areas: poverty alleviation through rural development and development management. These programmes would serve as catalyst for attracting and coordinating United Nations agencies and multi- and bilateral donor assistance. The multi-party democratic system adopted by Sao Tome would facilitate successful implementation of the programme.

6. One delegation strongly supported the approval of the country programme, emphasizing the challenges that the country faced and the appropriateness of the focus given by the programme. Another delegation requested clarification on how UNDP intended to tackle the issue of incentives and motivation for national civil servants and saw this as a possible obstacle to programme implementation.

7. In response, the Assistant Administrator mentioned that the problems of incentives and salary for national civil servants and project counterparts

were being addressed globally through the NATCAP exercise and studies such as the recent RBA initiative for capacity-building in Africa. The subject would be specifically addressed in the national context through an inter-agency and multi-donor initiative.

8. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fourth country programme for Sao Tome and Principe.

Rwanda

9. The fifth country programme for Rwanda, covering the period 1993-1996, with a net IPF of $39.4 million, was presented by the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa. The previous programme had been extended to cover 1992, in order to allow more time for the preparation of the fifth programme, considering the political changes taking place. Reference was made to the recommendations of the round-table meeting in July 1992 in Geneva and to the Government's efforts in the context of a Structural Adjustment Programme.

10. The country programme concentrated on two main areas: (a) poverty alleviation and social development and (b) strengthening national policy and management capacities. In the context of the first theme, UNDP would provide support for the formulation and implementation of a social development policy for institutions to implement the policy; increase incomes of vulnerable groups in rural areas; improve access to social services; and tackle the socio-economic impact of AIDS. Finally, it would support a global information-education communication programme. Under the second theme, UNDP cooperation would concentrate on programme coordination, including follow-up and evaluation; improvement of policy and management capacities as well as the coordination of aid; public administration reform and decentralization; and private sector development.

11. It was pointed out that the UNDP technical cooperation programme should be seen in the context of, and should be responsive to, changes towards democratization, free and fair elections and the participation of all population groups in the development process. Reintegrating internally displaced persons and returning refugees would represent a particular challenge to the Government and the whole donor community.

12. The representative of Rwanda confirmed his Government's priorities and the relevance of the UNDP country programme. He also referred to the war situation affecting the country, the peace effort being undertaken and the democratization and electoral process under way.

13. Several representatives, referred to the events of the past two weeks, which had dramatically increased the flow of people into neighbouring countries as well as the number of internally displaced people. They questioned whether it was opportune to proceed with the approval of the country programme and the long-term commitments proposed. Concern was also

expressed about the security situation resulting from the breakdown in the agreed cease-fire. The question was raised whether, under the present circumstances, there was an environment enabling the implementation of the country programme as presented.

14. Some representatives confirmed their agreement with the relevance of the priority areas as set forth in the country programme and the actions proposed to attain them while others found that the country programme did not adequately address the Government's management capacity, and that while the programme was detailed, it seemed to be based on a weak hypothesis.

15. Others observed the need to reduce the turnover of national staff, the increased role of UNDP and donor coordination required to strengthen the role of the national technical cooperation assessment and programmes (NATCAP) exercise, and for Government to implement more actively the planned reforms, including decentralization.

16. Taking into account the views expressed by delegates, the Committee noted that UNDP would organize a round-table meeting on humanitarian assistance by the end of March 1993 and would apply maximum flexibility in the implementation of the programme to ensure that adjustments were made to take into account the specific circumstances of the country. It would carry out close monitoring to ensure that the most critical needs were appropriately addressed.

17. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for Rwanda, with the provision that the Administrator would present an interim report to the Council at its fortieth session (1993) on the implementation of the country programme as well as on the evolution of the political circumstances in the country.

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CHAPTER II. FIELD VISITS

1. The report of the UNDP/UNFPA field visit to Bolivia (29 August-5 September 1992) and Paraguay (6-13 September 1992) was presented by the delegate from the United Kingdom. He noted that representatives of six delegations had participated in the visit: France, Italy, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and Uruguay. In his presentation, the delegate of the United Kingdom highlighted the degree of cooperation with UNDP in both countries and the notable commitment of all UNDP staff in the field offices.

2. During the discussion, one delegate commented on the report, drawing attention to the social aspects of development in the transition to a market economy and the use of UNDP resources to support a strategy for this; to the creation of a data bank to support market reforms; and to the need for further analytical work on the introduction of a market economy.

3. The report of the field visit to Syria (31 August-6 September 1992) and Yemen (7-13 September 1992) was presented by the delegate from Ghana, who noted that representatives of eight countries had participated in the visit: Austria, Cuba, Germany, Ghana, Nigeria, Poland, Romania and Saint Lucia. In commenting on the field visit, he drew attention to the introduction of the programme approach in both countries, noting some of the difficulties still

existing. With respect to national execution, the Government of Syria had embraced this modality for UNFPA projects, but only a few UNDP activities were nationally executed. In both countries, the neutral and catalytic role of UNDP was recognized. As regards coordination, the existing framework was adequate in Syria, but practical problems existed in Yemen on the sides of both the Government and UNDP. The performance of the Office for Project Services was considered to be mixed in the two countries. The role of UNDP as an important partner in development in both countries was acknowledged.

4. A number of other delegates commented on the report on visits to Syria and Yemen. It was noted that the report on the field visits to these two countries seemed less positive than the observations made on the two Latin American countries. A comparison was requested between the two regions with regards to the reasons for the different degree of implementation of Governing Council decisions. It was noted that the lack of a national plan would hinder a programme approach, yet many countries lacked such a plan, especially the poorer countries. One delegation noted that the problem of existing differences between official and market exchange rates would have to be taken up with concerned Governments to assure UNDP the most favourable exchange rate. While one delegate questioned whether UNDP had fully implemented relevant General Assembly resolutions at the field level, another pointed out that objective conditions often hindered their implementation in concrete cases. It was proposed that a synthesis be prepared on the field visits held so far.

5. The Assistant Administrator and Director, BPPE, responded to delegations by noting that the countries under discussion represented extremes in application of the programme approach. In one case, there was support at the highest level for the programme approach but in another there was need for an incremental approach to achieve a programme approach. At the fortieth session of the Governing Council, a report would be submitted on decentralization and there could also be an overview report on field visits. He also stated that while it was desirable to have a comprehensive national plan for the programme approach, it was also possible to use sectoral plans or investment plans for this purpose.

6. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States added that the specific realities in each country needed to be taken into account when judging programme implementation. On exchange rates, he noted that UNDP was following this matter closely.

7. The Chairman of the Committee underlined the value of field visits and the importance of their continuation, but cautioned against making comparisons between countries, given their diversity.

8. The Committee took note of the reports before it and agreed that the Bureau of the Standing Committee should discuss modalities for preparing a synthesis of field visits and report back to the Committee.

9. In reporting back to the Committee, the Bureau agreed to undertake a synthesis of the findings and recommendations contained in the reports on field visits that have so far been submitted to the Standing Committee. The synthesis of the reports would be submitted to the Standing Committee at its in-sessional meeting during the fortieth session of the Governing Council.

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CHAPTER VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS

1. Following its consideration of the items before it, the Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council adopt the following draft decision:

DRAFT DECISION

Country, intercountry and global programmes

The Governing Council

1. Approves the following country programmes:

African States

Fifth country programme for Ethiopia	DP/CP/ETH/5
Fifth country programme for Ghana	DP/CP/GHA/5

<u>African States</u> (continued)	
Fourth country programme for Mauritania	DP/CP/MAU/4
Fourth country programme for Sao Tomé and Principe	DP/CP/STP/4
Fifth country programme for Swaziland	DP/CP/SWA/5
Third country programme for Zimbabwe	DP/CP/ZIM/3
<u>Arab States</u>	
Sixth country programme for Algeria	DP/CP/ALG/6
Third country programme for Djibouti	DP/CP/DJI/3
Fifth country programme for Egypt	DP/CP/EGY/5
Third country programme for Lebanon	DP/CP/LEB/3
<u>European States</u>	
Fifth country programme for Bulgaria	DP/CP/BUL/5
Fifth country programme for Malta	DP/CP/MAT/5
Fifth country programme for Romania	DP/CP/ROM/5
<u>Asian States</u>	
Fifth country programme for Papua New Guinea	DP/CP/PNG/5
<u>Latin American and Caribbean States</u>	
Third country programme for Cayman Islands	DP/CP/CAY/3
Fifth country programme for Jamaica	DP/CP/JAM/5
Fifth country programme for Panama	DP/CP/PAN/5
Third country programme for Turks and Caicos Islands	DP/CP/TCI/3

2. <u>Approves</u> the fifth country programme for Rwanda with the provision that the Administrator shall present an interim report to the Council at its fortieth session on the implementation of the country programme as well as on the evolution of the political circumstances of the country;

3. <u>Takes note</u> of the extension of the third country programme for Cyprus (DP/CP/CYP/3/EXTENSION I);

4. Takes note of the Administrator's intention to continue to approve projects on a case-by-case basis for Somalia, pending normalization of the situation in the country; and requests the Administrator to report orally to the Council at its fortieth session on the results and progress of UNDP efforts in Somalia and to submit a written report on progress and results to the Council at its special session in February 1994;

5. Decides to discuss the general question of project approval on a case-by-case basis at its fortieth session;

6. Takes note of the tentative timetable for mid-term reviews 1993-1995 as contained in document DP/1993/6.